



## AFFORDABLE CARE ACT MASSACHUSETTS IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

September 7, 2011

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These Updates, published by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) in consultation with the other state agencies involved in ACA implementation, will bring you news related to the implementation of provisions of the ACA here in Massachusetts.

### Grants and Demonstrations

The ACA provides funding opportunities to transform how health care is delivered, expand access to care and support healthcare workforce training.

#### Grant Activity

**8/31/11** DPH was awarded \$993,662 in CDC funds for a **Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure for Improved Health Outcomes, "National Public Health Improvement Initiative" grant** under §4002 of the ACA. The program will strengthen the local public health infrastructure in Massachusetts by a) accelerating DPH's preparation for accreditation b) improving DPH's web-based Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network (MAVEN) disease surveillance and case management system and c) providing public health planning grants to municipalities to enter into agreements to share resources and coordinate activities to improve the scope, quality, and effectiveness of local public health services for their combined populations.

- Read the grant narrative on the national health reform website at: [Grant Narrative](#)

#### Guidance

**9/1/11** CMS released a final rule (which was published in the Federal Register on 9/6/11) which **amends the rate review final rule and clarifies that coverage sold to individuals or small groups through an association** is subject to rate review. The rule is effective November 1, 2011.

This final rule **amends the "Rate Increase Disclosure and Review" rule issued in May, 2011** which required disclosure and review of unreasonable premium increases under §1003 of the ACA. That rule established a rate review program to ensure that rate increases that meet or exceed a 10% threshold are reviewed by the state or CMS to determine whether they are unreasonable and that certain rate information be made public. Starting September 1, 2011, insurers seeking rate increases of 10% or more for non-grandfathered plans in the individual and small group markets were required to publicly and clearly disclose the proposed increases and the justification for them to consumers and post the justification for those increases on their website as well as on [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov). The final rule issued on September 1, 2011 also updates these standards for health insurance issuers regarding disclosure and review of unreasonable premium increases.

Read the rule at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-09-06/pdf/2011-22663.pdf>

Read the press release at: <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2011pres/09/20110901a.html>

Read the fact sheet at: <http://www.healthcare.gov/news/factsheets/ratereview09012011a.html>

Prior guidance can be viewed at: [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov)

## News

On September 1, 2011 in the Newsroom section of its Healthcare.gov website, the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) included Massachusetts in its list of Significant State Achievements using ACA Rate Review grant funding. According to HHS, "since receiving grant funds, the Massachusetts Division of Insurance contracted with actuaries to complete studies enabling the state to develop regulations to act upon the Division's new authority for expanding the filing requirements for small group rates. The studies were used by the Division of Insurance as part of regulatory changes to 'Small Group Health Insurance,' which were promulgated on April 1, 2011. The regulation will additionally serve as the blueprint to develop a data collection tool that will facilitate collection of commonly reported information across all small group rate filers. Grant funds allowed the Division to accelerate its research to meet the changing legal environment for small group health insurance rate review."

Read this news at: <http://www.healthcare.gov/news/factsheets/ratereview09012011b.html>

## Upcoming Events

### Next Quarterly Stakeholder Meeting

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act Implementation meeting

Monday October 17, 2011 from 11:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

1 Ashburton Place, 21<sup>st</sup> floor, Boston

Consumer Focused Meeting

### Integrating Medicare and Medicaid for Dual Eligible Individuals

September 27, 2011, 10am- 12 pm

1 Ashburton Place, 21<sup>st</sup> Floor, Conference Room 3

Boston, MA

\*please note the date change for the September meeting

Open Meeting

### Integrating Medicare and Medicaid for Dual Eligible Individuals

October 11, 2011, 10am- 12 pm

State Transportation Building

Conference Rooms 2 & 3, Second Floor  
10 Park Plaza  
Boston, MA

Bookmark the **Massachusetts National Health Care Reform website**  
at: [www.mass.gov/nationalhealthreform](http://www.mass.gov/nationalhealthreform) to read updates on ACA implementation in  
Massachusetts.

Remember to check [www.mass.gov/masshealth/duals](http://www.mass.gov/masshealth/duals) for information on the **"Integrating  
Medicare and Medicaid for Dual Eligible Individuals"** initiative.